

# Effexor (XR) (venlafaxine)



## What is it usually prescribed for?

Major depressive disorder, generalized anxiety disorder, social anxiety disorder, panic disorder, and other conditions.



## How does it work?

Effexor helps control feelings of sadness and fear or worry. Effexor is thought to boost the brain chemicals serotonin, norepinephrine, and dopamine, and balance the brain systems of these chemicals.

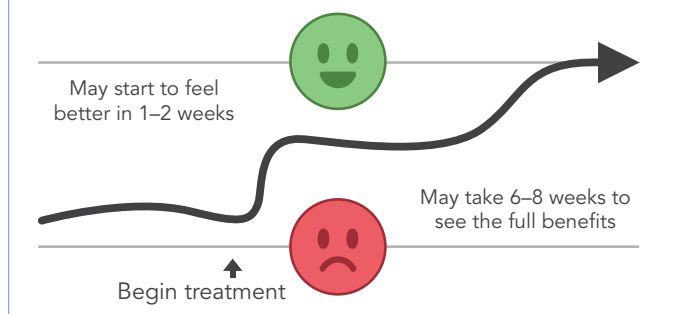


## What should I expect?

It may take a few weeks for you to feel the full benefits of taking this medicine. Sleep, energy, or hunger may improve within the first 1–2 weeks. Sadness and lack of interest in activities may need up to 6–8 weeks to improve fully.

Your healthcare professional will start with a low dose that is slowly increased to find the best dose that works for you. Tell your healthcare professional how it's working for you and if you have any side effects so the dose can be changed if needed.

### WHEN WILL I FEEL BETTER?



Take Effexor exactly as prescribed to get the full benefit of this medicine.



## Will I have side effects?

You may or may not have side effects when taking Effexor. Most side effects occur right away but go away with time. Blood pressure and sexual side effects of Effexor may last for a long time. Your healthcare professional may check your blood pressure before starting treatment and during treatment occasionally.

## What are common side effects and what can I do to feel better?

If your side effects are mild, talk to your healthcare professional about them at your next appointment.

	Drink plenty of water	Drink less caffeine and alcohol	Do more exercise	Healthcare professional suggestion
Nausea	X	X		
Diarrhea	X	X		
Sweating	X			
Dry mouth	X	X		
Feeling nervous		X	X	
Trouble sleeping		X	X	
Headache	X	X	X	

Note: This is not a complete list of side effects; other side effects are possible. Before starting Effexor, tell your healthcare professional about all the medicines you are taking to avoid unexpected side effects.



Neuroscience Education Institute

Last updated 07/2021

# Effexor (XR) (venlafaxine)

## YOU'RE NOT ALONE!

In 2018, Effexor was prescribed over 16.1 million times in the United States.






## What should I avoid?

Don't start any new medicines, over-the-counter drugs, or herbal remedies without talking to your healthcare professional first. There are many interactions with medicines that may increase your chance of side effects.

Do not suddenly stop taking Effexor unless your healthcare professional has told you to, because it can cause nausea, headache, irritability, and other negative feelings.

Use less alcohol and recreational drugs. They may decrease the benefits of Effexor and increase the chance of side effects.

## WHAT IS MOST IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER

-  It may take up to a few weeks for you to feel the full benefits of taking this medicine
-  Tell your healthcare professional about any troubling side effects so that you can work together to address them
-  Do not suddenly stop taking this medicine unless told to do so by your healthcare professional
-  Don't start any new medicines, over-the-counter drugs, or herbal remedies without talking to your healthcare professional
-  Get medical care right away if you have serious side effects



## When should I call a healthcare professional right away or visit the emergency room?

If you have any **serious** side effects. Here are some examples of serious side effects:

- Thoughts of suicide or are planning to hurt yourself
- Very stiff muscles, high fever, sweating, confusion, fast or uneven heartbeats, feeling like you might pass out
- Very bad headache, slurred speech, throwing up, feeling unsteady
- Blurred vision, tunnel vision, eye pain or swelling, or seeing halos around light
- Cough, chest tightness, trouble breathing

If you think there has been an overdose, call your poison control center (800-222-1222) or get medical care right away.



## Where can I get more help?

National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) – [nami.org](http://nami.org)

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline – Call 1-800-273-TALK (8255)

Crisis Text Line – Text "HELLO" to 741741



## Notes and questions for my next appointment

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

